that suggestions made before it for looking into the criteria for granting Special Category Status to States should be examined.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The situation arising out of long dry spell during current South-West Monsoon period in some of the States including Karnataka was reviewed in a meeting taken by the Union Agriculture Minister with Agriculture and Relief Ministers of States on 24.7.2002 and the situation is constantly reviewed for suitable action.

Development of roads in North-Eastern Region

1739. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to develop the infrastructure further particularly in road and highways sector in North-Eastern Region during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether there is any proposal to convert important roads in Assam and in other States of North-Eastern Region into Highways during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) At present there is no proposal to declare new National Highways in Assam or other States of North-Eastern Region. However, based on traffic needs, other priorities and the availability of funds, such proposals may be considered in the Tenth Five Year Plan.

National Highways in Bihar

1740. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the length of National Highways passes through Bihar;

(b) how many kms. of this is fit to travel at the speed of 60 km/hr.;

(c) the length of the road that needs repair and is being repaired presently; and

(d) what efforts are being made to make these roads fit to travel at the speed of 100 km/hr.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI) : (a) The total length of National Highways passing through the State of Bihar is 3301 kms. Out of which 2035 kms. were upgraded to National Highways during the 9th Plan.

(b) to (d) A total length of 723 km. is planned for four-laning under 'Golden Quadrilateral' and East-West Corridor of National Highways Development Programme (NHDP), being implemented by National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). Four-laning under 'Golden Quadrilateral' in a length 206 km. at an estimated cost of Rs.1400 crores is targeted for substantial completion by December, 2003, and four-laning under East-West Corridor in a length of 517 km. at an estimated cost of Rs.2400 crores is targeted for completion by December, 2007. Riding quality of 1173 km. length of NH's at an estimated cost of Rs.175 crores has been improved since 1999. Estimate for improvement of riding quality for another 377 km. of NH's at an estimated cost of Rs.75 crores stands sanctioned and works are in various stages of progress. Improvement of balance length of 1028 km. is planned to be taken up in the next two years. The roads under NHDP are designed for speed of 100 km./hr. and National Highways after improvement of riding quality would be fit for 60 km./hr. speed. However, the speed depends on several factors and speed limit is notified accordingly by the State Government.

Development and maintenance/repair of National Highways is a continuous process and is taken up based on traffic needs, inter-se priority and availability of funds.

Registration of vehicles

1741. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the system of disposal prescribed for the old registration number of vehicles;

(b) when the new system of registration of Motor Vehicles came into force;